

formal and perfunctory. The dormitories or other sleeping rooms for the monks are sometimes very comfortable and occasionally, in spite of the rule, the monks have individual possessions.

The number and arrangement of buildings, halls, and images vary from sect to sect and from monastery to monastery. The usual outline of the monastery is a rectangle surrounded by a wall. Along the sides may be cells for the monks, guest-rooms, the dining hall, storerooms, and the like. Crossing the quadrangle transversely and separated by courts may be three halls. In the one nearest the entrance are customarily found four menacing figures, two on each side of the hall, each of a different color, and known collectively as the Four Heavenly Kings (*Ssu T'ien Wang*). Each is supposed to govern one of the continents which lie in the direction of the four points of the compass from Mt. Sumeru, the center of the universe. Their fierce demeanor does not inspire fear in the instructed believer, but rather confidence, for they afford protection to and bestow happiness upon the faithful. In the center of this first hall is an image of Maitreya (in Chinese, Mi-lo-fo), fat and laughing, and commonly called by foreigners the Laughing Buddha. This statue, it may be noted, is the conventionalized portrait of a Chinese monk of the tenth century who claimed to be an incarnation of Maitreya. He is the bodhisattva who, after the law has been forgotten and the world become corrupt, is to come and establish on earth the lost truths of Buddhism. Back to back with Mi-lo-fo, usually separated from him by a screen, is Wei-t'o, a bodhisattva, the protector of monasteries, represented as panoplied in full armor and

armed with a sword. The worshiper, having passed these encouragements to his faith, now proceeds to the second and main hall, where are represented the leading truths and figures of Buddhism. In the place of honor is generally either one great image, usually that of the historic Gautama Buddha (or, perhaps, Kuan-yin, "The Goddess of Mercy/" or O-mi-t'o-fo) or a trinity of images called "The Three Precious Ones" (San Pao) or "The Three Great Venerable Ones." If a trinity, the ideas or persons represented by the images may vary. They may be the historic Buddha flanked by O-mi-t'o-fo (Amitabha, also called A-mi-t'o or A-mi-t'o-fo) and the "Healing Buddha" (Yao-shih-fo) or by two other buddhas or bodhisattvas, or they may be the Buddha, the Law, and the